CHAPTER III.

Mayurbhanj under Srinath Chandra Bhanj Deo and Krishna Chandra Bhanj Deo.

Jadunath Bhanj had three sons, Srinath Bhanj, Sitanath Bhanj, and Dwarka Nath Bhanj. The eldest son, Srinath Bhanj, succeeded him, but failed to carry on the efficient and just policy of his father. Though simple and kind-hearted, he was also weak, luxurious, and fond of pleasure, and easily led astray by the unscrupulous hangers-on with whom he surrounded himself. He lived for pleasure and neglected the affairs of the State; when he did interfere in them his actions, undertaken on the advice of his unscrupulous followers, were most arbitrary with the natural result that the administration was disorganized and his authority was set at defiance. The people of Bahmanghatti and Upperbhag took to rioting and looting, in consequence of which the subdivision of Bahmanghatti was taken under the direct control of Government in 1866, and its management was made over to the Deputy Commissioner of Singbhum; and further, a police-station was opened by Government at Bankati in the Upperbhag pargana to keep the people of that area in order.

He had no children of his own, and his heir was, therefore, Krishna Chandra Bhanj, the eldest son of his younger brother. Srinath Chandra, however, hated the children of this brother and did his best to disinherit Krishna Chandra and to appoint an orphan Brahmin boy as his successor. Fortunately for the State, and for Krishna Chandra, he had a powerful friend in Mr. T. E. Ravenshaw, the then Commissioner of the Orissa Division and Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals, who opposed Srinath Chandra's attempt to disinherit his nephew, and appointed the latter as Manager of the State. The Raja, however, cared nothing for his advice and continued his vicious life, doing all that he could to interfere with his nephew's attempts to bring order into the administration of the State.

Srinath Chandra died in 1868 and was succeeded by Krishna Chandra Bhanj, who at once began gradually to put into effect the reforms in administration which he had vainly attempted to inaugurate during his uncle's life-time. He was only eighteen years of age at the time of his succession, and was a handsome and intelligent young man, of ready resource and charming manners. He had no English education, but proved himself a very able and wise ruler, and was assisted and advised in his work by Mr. Ravenshaw, who had a high regard for him. He had no easy time at first, as the intrigues against him, begun under the rule of Srinath Chandra,

were continued after the latter's death by some of his officers, who tried to deprive him of hisl egal right to the Gadi. The widowed Rani of Srinath Chandra too, for some time, helped these designing persons, but without success. When she realised that an attempt to disinherit Krishna Chandra would not be just or fair and was sure to prove abortive, she gave up the idea and began to show favour to him. It required no small amount of tact and wisdom on the part of young Krishna Chandra to win the favour and affection of his aunt, who had been actively concerned in the plot to ruin him. Fortunately for Mayurbhanj, in Krishna Chandra she found a ruler who, though not a puritan in character, had many good qualities of head and heart. With commendable zeal and earnestness he tried to promote the best interests of the State, planting the tree of progress, which developed and spread its branches under the fostering care of his son, Sri Ram Chandra,—the theme of this book. He was created a Maharaja in 1877 for his efficient administration of the State and for his public liberality, the most prominent instance of which was his donation of Rs. 27,000 towards raising the Cuttack High School to the status of a college—which is now known as the Ravenshaw College—the only college in Orissa ; and in recognition of his able and efficient rule, the subdivision of Bahmanghatti was restored to his direct control in 1878.

Previous to the accession of Krishna Chandra, no attempt had been made to introduce into the State modern methods of administration. Jadunath Bhanj, while a wise and efficient Chief, had merely continued the personal rule of his forefathers with the help of his Diwan and other ancestral officers. Krishna Chandra had to create every department, practically from the beginning. He established civil, criminal, and revenue courts and appointed special officers to their charge, each with a sufficient complement of subordinates. Formerly the administration of justice had not been systematically carried on, there being no books or records or documents of any sort. The Diwan or other officers who were empowered to try particular cases disposed of them verbally after hearing both sides and their witnesses. Paper was very seldom used, such writing as was done being on palm leaves. Except the Diwan, all other officers used to squat on mats or carpets while trying cases or discharging other duties. As a special distinction the Diwan had a quilt on a carpet for his seat with several big pillows for his comfort. The Diwan had nothing to do with writing ; all that he had to do was to pass verbal orders and sign his name where necessary. Maharaja Krishna Chandra abolished this obsolete system and provided all superior officers with tables and chairs, and the ministerial officers with benches. Only the nazirs, moharrirs, and other subordinate

officials used carpets as before. Record books relating to cases were ordered to be kept, files were introduced, plaints and written statements, evidence of witnesses and the judgments of the courts were ordered to be written on paper, and the use of the antiquated palm leaves was done away with. A record room for the safe custody of all documents, registers, and papers was established. Process peons were engaged and process fees charged for the service of summons and notices, but court fees were not charged till towards the close of his rule, when they were imposed to a nominal amount. Some mukhtears were allowed to appear for parties in suits, and a State pleader was engaged to conduct cases on behalf of the State. A Registry Office was created at Baripada, and a Sub-Registrar appointed under the Collector for the registration of deeds of sale, mortgage, etc. If any one was dissatisfied with the order of a lower court, he could prefer an appeal to the Chief, who called for the papers, and after having heard the arguments of the mukhtears on both sides, finally disposed of the case, writing the judgments in important cases in the vernacular with his own hand. All people were satisfied with the even-handed justice dealt out by Maharaja Krishna Chandra.

The rudiments of a separate police department were created by the investiture of each Sardar of every pargana in Mayurbhanj proper with police

powers. They discharged the duties of a Sub-Inspector of Police in their respective jurisdictions and dealt with petty cases, important cases being personally investigated by some of the higher officers of the State. The Sardars of Panchpir were not invested with police powers, but a police-station was established in that subdivision, at Joshipur, in charge of a Sub-Inspector, under whom there were some constables. Constables were also stationed at Baripada to police the town.

Up to this time there had been no jail in existence. An under-trial prisoner was secured in stocks, which held fast one of his feet in such a manner that escape was impossible. Prisoners were generally fined and seldom sentenced to imprisonment; hence the want of a jail was not seriously felt. If any prisoner was ever sentenced to a term of imprisonment, he was put in the stocks for the period. This form of stocks is still in use in French Chandernagore and is known as torang. Krishna Chandra abolished this form of punishment and built a proper jail and a hajat for under-trial prisoners. Those who underwent civil imprisonment were housed in a separate part of the jail building. A Brahman cook was engaged to cook the prisoners' food. Convicts were made to work in the State gardens, and on the buildings and roads when necessary.

The assessment of land revenue had previously been made in a rough and ready manner, the pradhan

or village headman engaging to pay so much to the State and taking for himself all he collected from the raiyats above that amount. In order to put a stop to the malpractices of some unscrupulous pradhans, who used to charge excessive rents from the cultivators by leasing out lands without any measurement and fixing rates at their own sweet will, Survey and Settlement operations were introduced and carried out pargana by pargana. The Uriya system of measurement was employed, and records of the Survey and Settlement prepared and preserved. The State was divided into districts and parganas, and a Sardar was appointed in each pargana. The pradhans collected rent from the cultivators in their respective villages and paid it to their Sardars, who in their turn made over the amounts to the State Treasury. The Sardars and pradhans were remunerated in some cases by a fixed percentage of the total jamas assessed, and in other cases by the proceeds of settlement of all waste lands which might be brought under cultivation within the period of their engagements. If the cultivators witheld payments, the pradhans brought rent suits against them in the Collector's Court, and similarly the Sardars also might sue the pradhans for non-payment of the revenue collection in time, and they themselves in their turn might be sued by the State for the same reason.

A Public Works Department was established under the charge of Mr. J. L. Atkinson, for the erection and repair of State buildings and the construction of roads. There was no system previously for the execution of such work. Such roads as existed were mere tracks; even in the town of Baripada there were no metalled roads. Water accumulated in places in the Sadar road and water-lilies grew there, much to the inconvenience of officers who had occasion to go to the Rajbati. After reaching the Rajbati they had to wash their muddy feet before taking their seats, and for this purpose a pail of water was constantly kept ready in a particular corner. The metalling of this Sadar road was one of the first works of the newly created department, and after this several other pucca roads were created within and without the town. The roads from Baripada to Balasore and from Baripada to Bahalda were first constructed during this administration.

Another important work of this department was the carrying out of additions and alterations to the Rajbati. Formerly, with the exception of the Gol Verandah, Sat Bakhra and one or two buildings in the inner apartment, there were no masonry structures at all; the rest were all thatched huts. These were replaced by brick buildings. The Lion Gate was also built at this time; and other buildings erected such as the school-house,

police-station, post-office, jail, a rest-house at Gulapbagh for the reception of Government officials. Some irrigation bandhs were also undertaken, such as that at Mundari in pargana Rasunia.

An Education Department was created, and placed in charge of Dr. H. C. Bowzer, who was also medical officer. A school was established at Baripada and an English-knowing teacher and an Uriya pandit were placed in charge of it. Uriya and elementary English were taught in this school. Several elementary schools were also set up in various places in the Bahmanghatti and Panchpir subdivisions and Uriya abadhans appointed to them. These schools were all free and no fees were charged from the boys, the State bearing all expenses. Later the inspection of the schools was entrusted to Government.

A charitable dispensary was started at Baripada, in charge of Dr. H. C. Bowzer. It was held in a room in the Rajbati. At that time, however, people had no faith in Western medicine, and very few came to Dr. Bowzer for medical help and ultimately he resigned. After some other changes a hospital assistant, Pravakar Das, was placed in charge of the dispensary and succeeded to some extent in making it popular. There was in addition a local native doctor, who dispensed Ayurvedic medicines.

A primitive Postal System was created, by the stationing of a postal clerk at Baripada and another

at Balasore. The Baripada clerk sent all letters to the clerk at Balasore, who posted them in the local Government Post Office. The Postmaster at Balasore made over all letters intended for the State to the State clerk at Balasore, who in his turn sent them to the clerk at Baripada for delivery.

Many other miscellaneous institutions had also their origin at this time. Such, for instance, were the printing press at Baripada, where all forms, summonses, warrants, etc., were printed. A newspaper, called the "Mayurbhanj Fortnightly Magazine," was published from that press, the Maharaja bearing all the expenses himself. A Library was established and stocked with a good collection of Bengali and English books. A beautiful garden was laid out at Gulapbagh, where fruits and vegetables of various kinds were grown for the first time.

Such were the rudiments of order and method in administration created by Maharaja Krishna Chandra Bhanj Deo, to replace the primitive rule of his ancestors, and such the foundations on which his son, Sri Ram Chandra, had to build the edifice of State as it now exists. Krishna Chandra was well and faithfully aided by the officers whom he wisely chose to carry out his plans, of whom the most important were his Diwan, Nunda Kumar Mukherji, and, after his death, Diwan Prasanna Kumar Ghosal; Settlement Officer, Babu Durga Prasad Das; Treasury Officer, Babu Artatran

Mahapatra; and Babu Ramhari Jit Bebarta; some of whom continued to work under his son. His institutions were continued and improved upon under Government management, in the hands of Mr. H. P. Wylly, who ably and efficiently administered the State during the period of Sri Ram Chandra's minority. But it was left for Sri Ram Chandra to develop and bring into full being these elementary beginnings. He undertook the task with a strong sense of duty and responsibility, and the measure of his success is the measure of that uprightness, conscientiousness, and love of justice which he devoted to the fulfilment of his trust.

CHAPTER IV.

Birth and Early Life of Sri Ram Chandra.

Sri Ram Chandra was born on the 17th December, 1871. The happy event was celebrated with great rejoicing and liberal distribution of alms and money to the poor and to the Brahmans; and in some cases even lands were given by Raja Krishna Chandra to particular individuals. Sri Ram Chandra was ushered into the world with the good wishes of the people and the blessings of God, who reserved some of his choicest favours in store for him.

In his fifth year Sri Ram Chandra was, according to the Hindu custom, initiated into the mysteries of the vernacular alphabet, and received his first lessons from an Uria abadhan. According to the usual practice he had to write on the ground with a piece of chalk. He had a very sharp intellect and retentive memory and never forgot what he was told by his teacher. At times his father expressed great delight at the boy's intelligence and progress, for even at this early period he bade fair to be a great man. This was not to be greatly wondered at, for both his father and his mother were endowed with exceptional intelligence and good sense.

Sri Ram Chandra learned Uriya for about two years from the abadhan. Then a private tutor with some knowledge of English was engaged to give him lessons in English. Along with English, Uriya lessons were also continued as before. After a course of training like this for another two years, he was admitted into the Anglo-Vernacular School at Baripada. Some time afterwards Pandit Govinda Chandra Mahapatra, then a sub-inspector of schools under Government, who was entrusted with the inspection of schools in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar, was appointed as his private tutor and taught him Sanskrit and laid the foundation of his education in other subjects. The pandit's services were lent to the State, and he was in later years appointed State Collector by his erstwhile pupil, in which post he died in harness.

When he reached the age of nine years, Sri Ram Chandra's Upanayana ceremony was performed amid great rejoicings, and he was invested with the sacred thread which the Kshatriyas, like the Brahmins, are entitled to wear. Thereafter two years rolled on smoothly, and then the boy received a terrible blow, for he lost both his father and his mother within a few days of each other.

The tragic event, swift and merciless in its onslaught, was not without a touch of the sublime. Maharaja Krishna Chandra had a mind to retire on the completion of his son's education, but that was

not to be. The terrible scourge of small-pox broke out at Baripada, and Sri Ram Chandra was one of the first to be attacked by the fell disease. He was the apple of his father's eye, and Krishna Chandra's anxiety knew no bounds. He touched no food and took no sleep, but watched night and day by the sick bed of his beloved son. His constant prayer was, "My darling, may you recover, and may your disease take me," and this was fulfilled. More things are wrought by prayer than we know of. Sri Ram Chandra recovered, but Maharaja Krishna Chandra, the Maharani and other members of the Raj family were attacked by the disease, which was then doing terrible havoc in the town. The Civil Surgeon and the Magistrate of Balasore came to Baripada to render all possible aid, but all human efforts to save Krishna Chandra proved futile, and he was cut off in the prime of his life on the 29th of May, 1882, when he was only 34 years old. History records a parallel case which will bear repetition here. When Humayun was lying seriously ill on one occasion, his father, Baber, the founder of the Moghul Empire in India, walked seven times round the sick bed, uttering some prayers from the Koran the while. This done he exclaimed: "I have taken it away, I have taken it away," and it is stated that from that day Humayun began to recover but Baber's health declined, and when the son was restored to health the father passed away.

The whole of Mayurbhanj was plunged into deep sorrow at the untimely death of Maharaja Krishna Chandra, for he was a very popular ruler, gifted with many a good quality of head and of heart. And misfortune did not come singly, for, after a few days, his pious and devoted wife, the Maharani, joined her husband in that blessed region where sorrow and separation are unknown. The terrible shock which Sri Ram Chandra, then a tender boy in his twelfth year, received can better be imagined than described, suddenly deprived as he was of the fostering care and guidance of an affectionate father and the gentle influence of a loving mother. The boy naturally felt stunned by the blow and, being of a shy disposition, he now became exceedingly moody and dejected.

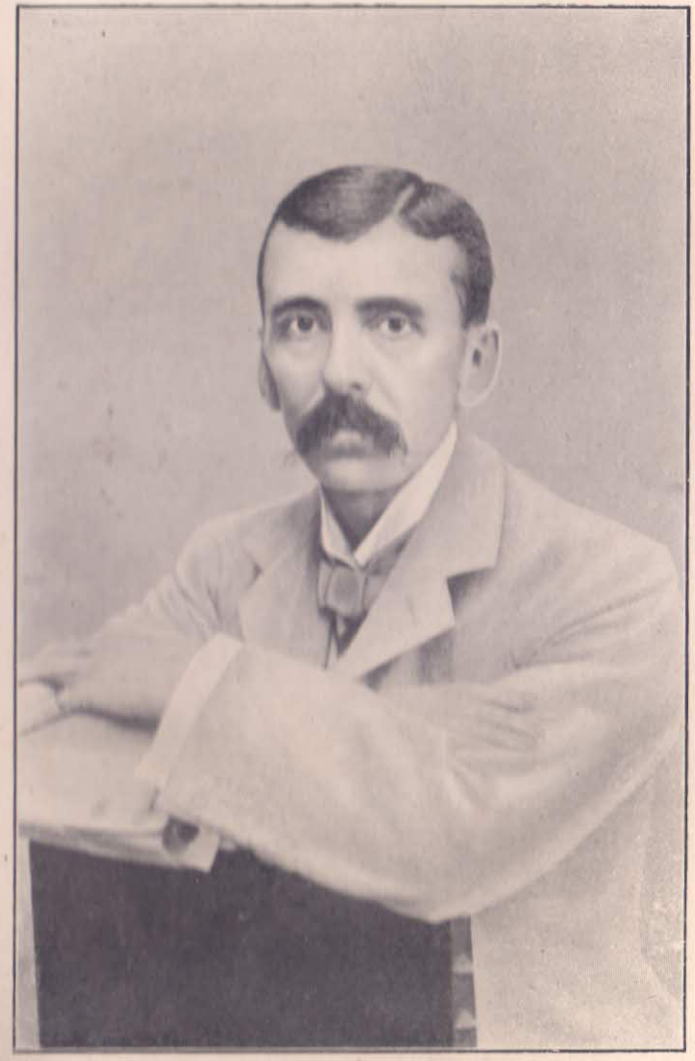
As Sri Ram Chandra was a minor, the State came under the direct control of the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals of Orissa and Mr. H. P. Wylly was appointed as its Manager, in December 1882. Maharaja Krishna Chandra had left three sons and four daughters. Of these the second son was adopted in 1882 by the childless Raja of Nilgiri, and eventually became the Raja of that State.. The third son, Shreedam Chandra Bhanj Deo, then an infant, now lives at Baripada where he is manager of domestic affairs, and, in his keen interest in the education and training of the present minor Chief and the great and good influence of his upright and

pious character, supplies as far as is possible the place of the father of whom the youth has been so unhappily deprived. Mr. Wylly wrote of the three brothers in his Annual Report for 1882-83: "The young Raja is a quiet and good-dispositioned boy, who, with different surroundings and influences, could be trained into a good, manly Chief. He appears to me to be delicate. This may be due to want of exercise and good food. The boy, adopted by the Nilgiri Raja, has more life and vitality than his elder brother. He has also a better constitution. The youngest boy is only four years old."

The future training and career of Sri Ram Chandra proved the soundness of this early estimate of his character. He continued his studies at the Baripada School for about a year more, after which the Superintendent of the Orissa Tributary Mahals made arrangements for his further education at Cuttack, whither he was sent in 1884 in charge of Pandit Govinda Mahapatra, much to the distress of his grandmother, who strongly objected to parting with the boy and for about a week refused to return to the Palace quarters. However, she soon perceived the wisdom of the step taken and became reconciled to the separation. She utterly refused, however, to allow the youngest boy to go to Cuttack with his brother as was proposed by the Superintendent.

From this time on Sri Ram Chandra was placed in charge of another man about whom we must here

say something in detail, for naturally in the study of a life it is of importance and interest to learn something of the formative influences which have been brought to bear on the character portrait, especially those of the earlier plastic years; so it will not be out of place to introduce one who had the greatest influence on Sri Ram Chandra from his thirteenth year till his death, for both the pupil and his guardian finished their life-tasks within a few months of each other. In the year 1884, Sir Rivers Thomson, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, requested Mr. H. Bartram Kiddell to go up to Darjeeling and see him on important business. Without knowing in the least the nature of the business, Mr. Kiddell on arrival called at The Shrubbery, and was offered the charge of the minor Raja of Mayurbhanj. To his enquiry as to where Mayurbhanj was, the reply was given, "Away in the jungle tracts of Orissa." The guardian-elect, however, was told that for the major part of his time he would have to reside at Cuttack to provide greater facilities for education. Fascinated by the idea of shaping a life which held such potentialities, Mr. Kiddell accepted the charge. Sir Rivers Thomson in his characteristic way demanded from him whether "he would take him as his own son and make a man of him, not a scholar only or a sportsman." The reply, "I will, sir," given in the emphatic manner, so well known to the people of Mayurbhanj, was



Mr. H. B. Kiddell.

faithfully kept through twenty-seven years of stress and strain that would have dismayed a less courageous man.

The route having been ascertained, a passage was taken by steamer to Cuttack, and farewells were said, in a manner that implied, as a friend expressed it: "We thought Kiddell was disappearing from civilization." In those days there was a Hindustani saying which meant "He who goes to Cuttack never returns." On arrival at Cuttack Mr. Kiddell found his charge under the care of Pandit Govinda Chandra Mahapatra, who was thereafter retained by Government as assistant tutor. The English greeting of "Good-evening, sir," with which he was welcomed in the early morning, was often referred to with amusement by the Maharaja in later years when his knowledge of English had improved so much and his accent was so perfect that, on one occasion at least, Royalty complimented him on it. It had been arranged that Mr. Kiddell should occupy a separate house and control the young Raja of Dhenkanal as well as his more particular charge. This did not prove satisfactory; so, on the death of the genial young Chief of Dhenkanal, who was a great favourite with all who knew him, Mr. Kiddel obtained permission to take up his residence in the Mayurbhanj House. From that time on for twelve years the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj shared the same roof as his master, this close relationship continuing

for six years after the young Chief attained his Gadi. Thus a firm friendship was cemented and a respect for the older man created, which no false slanders and no differences of opinion on matters of administration could eradicate. No single act of disobedience was known to have been committed nor any disrespect of authority ever shown by the young Chief during his minority; yet he was not without spirit, for there were occasional assertions of "rights" over a younger brother in which some muscular prowess was displayed to show that, although of a quiet and peaceable disposition, he was not prepared to knuckle under to the more assertive youngster.

Various amusing incidents of that period can be recalled, such as the first introduction of soap into the ritual of the bath. This useful commodity was at that time tabooed in ordinary Hindu homes, and its use was considered an innovation worthy of being handed up to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal as a breach of caste. However, on this subject of caste no one was more particular than the English guardian, who insisted on all that was essential being performed in the usual way. At the same time the Maharaja very quickly learnt from example that the phrase often on the lips of Mr. Kiddell, "Remember a man's a man, though he is of low caste," was a true one, and at no time afterwards did he show contempt for any human being, except on account of contemptible deeds.

As a boy Sri Ram Chandra was very moody and rather shy and reserved. During their morning rides, Mr. Kiddell used to point out to him various things of interest in passing. At first he was annoyed at being disturbed in his meditations, but he afterwards grew keen to forestall his companion in remarking on objects worthy of notice, and great was his triumph when he discovered things missed by his tutor. One of his chief characteristics in after-life was keen and intelligent observation.

Mrs. Kiddell, too, had no small share in forming the character of Sri Ram Chandra. She is a woman of fine culture, strong intellect, and brave heart. Her sympathetic nature was manifested in her whole-hearted devotion to the poor lepers of Mayurbhanj, for whom the Maharaja later on founded an asylum, of which Mrs. Kiddell was the guiding spirit and manager. The force of her commanding personality was often gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Kiddell himself, and the sterling qualities of her head and heart are well known to the people of Mayurbhanj who came into close contact with her.

CHAPTER V.

His School and College Life—His Accession to the Gadi.

As a youth Sri Ram Chandra was quiet-natured, reserved, and of a thoughtful turn of mind. From boyhood he was very studious and, unlike most other boys, was more fond of reading than of play; but his studies were not confined to text-books only. He took special delight in reading books on various subjects of general knowledge, particularly of history and literature. One of his early attempts at English writing was the translation from the Uriya Pattas of an account of the State from its beginning up to the time of his father's decease. His fondness for reading was phenomenal, and no recreation was more enjoyed by him in later years when it took the place of shikar on which he was very keen in his earlier days. Grimm's Fairy Tales he read and re-read, as well as all the usual books of adventure which boys delight in. Rapidly he passed on to John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, and was rather a trying person to his tutors during that period. Once later in life, referring to that time, he wrote of himself as "an arrogant, ignorant youth, thinking I knew everything, while time has found me

more conscious than ever that the Blind Force I was so loud in advocating is a Personal Deity who takes an interest in His creatures." One can say, however, that his arrogance was of a much more bearable type than that of many of his companions.

He was fond of games too, though they took a second place after his books, and were of a somewhat more serious and quiet nature than those indulged in by the average boy. At an early stage he used to amuse himself with playing at "Cutcherry." Chessmen, paperweights, and tiles were utilized for the personnel and make-up of the miniature courts. Charges were framed and cases written up, and pigeons, of which he had a splendid collection, were tried and sentenced, and in one case at least the capital punishment was inflicted and duly carried out. Later on, when court cases of a more serious nature claimed his energy, he turned his attention to military matters. He had a large army of a thousand wooden soldiers, about eight inches in height, fitted with metal weapons and several brass cannon, all locally made. The roof of Belgaria Palace was often the scene of a military review in miniature, but only a very select few were ever allowed to witness it.

He was never a keen rider, but with his guardian was much in the saddle and also out of it, as frequent records in Mr. Kiddell's diary show; the good effect of this was made apparent in his power of sticking

on in later life ; and he was fond of his ponies as of all animals. The Commissioner of Orissa once forbade certain ponies being used again on account of their eccentric performances in Ravenshaw College porch and other places. The boy was in Darjeeling when the prohibition was forwarded, through His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. On being asked if he really wanted to keep the ponies, the Maharaja said he did and would be very sorry to part with them.

The then Chief Secretary, who was always an admirer of sporting proclivities, told Mr. Kiddell to keep the ponies, and they lived to a good, if not a righteous, old age in Belgaria stables.

At about the same time, in Darjeeling, the Maharaja won a paper-screen race on his good old polo pony, Tom Pinch. Mrs. Kiddell writes : " Some of us can still remember a New Year's day sports at Baripada when he entered for the ' Tilting at the Ring.' When his rider had taken all the rings Tom Pinch took charge and carried off his master at a mad gallop straight back to the stables. The boy kept his seat and his head, and escaped injury by ducking as the pony rushed into his stall."

He did not take part in the school games at Ravenshaw College as his recreation was provided for outside. Riding was his chief exercise, tennis he played fairly, racquets very well indeed. In his young days football was considered *infra dig.* for a

Chief, but he played a mild game at cricket. Billiards he excelled in, but oriental courtesy forbade his playing his best on his own table against invited guests. He played a good game of chess either in the English or in the Indian mode. There were few English boys and girls in Cuttack, but those there were he fraternized with by riding out with them and going to children's parties, sometimes in fancy dress.

He was very fond of shikar, and learned to use a gun at an early age, and for many years shooting was his favourite sport. Great physical courage was always one of his strong characteristics. Travelling by sea to Cuttack in the " Sir John Lawrence " during the voyage just before that in which she foundered with all hands, a terrible cyclone was encountered, but the Maharaja showed the same fearlessness then as often displayed in later life on land.

He loved travel, but rebelled a good deal at the paraphernalia necessary during his minority ; but once the journey was over he thoroughly enjoyed Darjeeling. In 1889 he took a trip to Ceylon with his guardian for the sake of his health. The journey was nearly frustrated at the last moment by the desertion of all the servants from the ship at the moment of casting off—most probably instigated thereto by some unscrupulous hanger-on of the Raj family. Fortunately the Brahmin cook was detained and the food difficulty obviated, and fresh

servants were engaged at Colombo. The trip was spoiled to some extent owing to the development of an attack of eczema, but the Maharaja visited Kandy and most of the places of interest in the island. His visit had, however, to be curtailed, much to his disappointment, and though the return voyage did much to restore him to health he had to be placed under medical treatment on his arrival at Calcutta. His eyes were affected, and he had to be placed in a darkened room for some days and was forbidden to read, but such was his love of reading that he managed to secrete a book, with the result that the eyes did not improve till the doctor temporarily dilated the pupils so that reading was impossible.

By nature and in his bearing towards others he was quiet and gentle, never losing temper with, or being rude to, any person, however humble, and being ever careful not to hurt the feelings of anyone by word or deed. His high position never made him overbearing or condescending in his manners ; on the contrary, all his dealings with his classmates and associates were marked by an unaffected simplicity and freedom, which, however, never degenerated into undue familiarity. Above all, what reflected the greatest credit on him was his successful maintenance of the purity of his character and life. Though living in the midst of temptations, and surrounded by menials and other people of

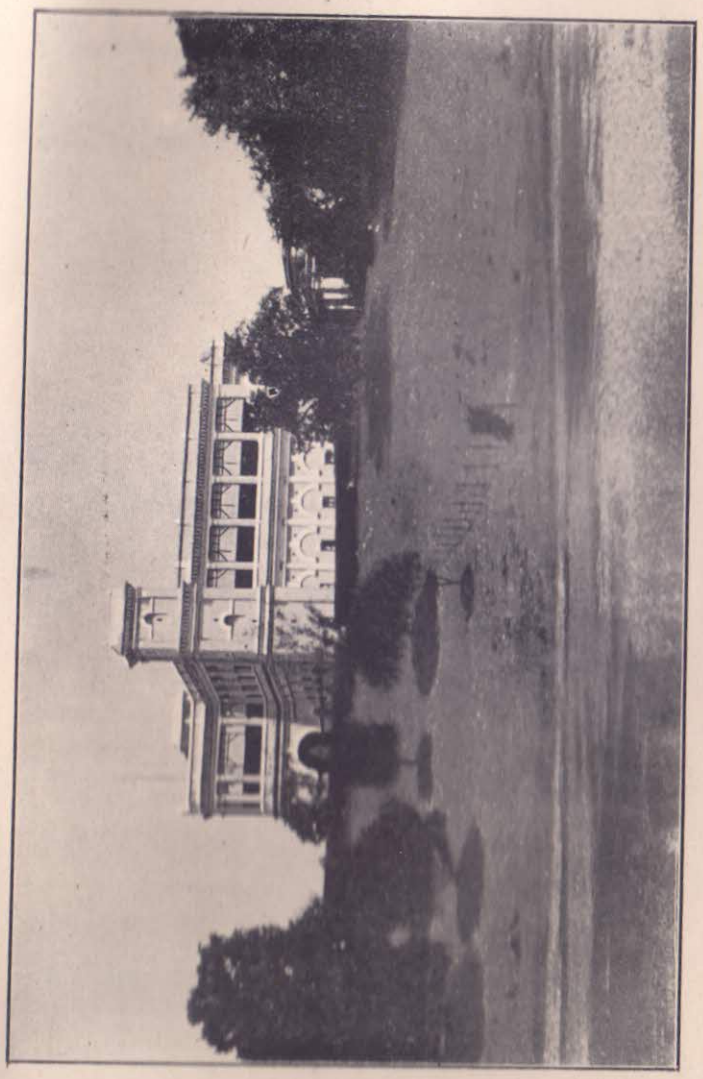
questionable morality who tried their utmost to lead him astray in order to gain their own selfish ends, he came through the ordeal unscathed. Babu Ram Narayan Sarangi, the retired State Collector of Mayurbhanj, an able and trusted servant of the State since the days of Maharaja Krishna Chandra, in a letter to the author writes :—

" Sri Ram Chandra was very quiet and gentle in his childhood. He never used any harsh words to menials or to anyone else. Bad characters are not wanting at most of the Garjat States even now, and the condition of things was worse a quarter of a century ago. After the death of Maharaja Krishna Chandra, the servants of the Rajbati and other bad characters who had access there tried their best to lead their young master astray, but fortunately they did not succeed. Sri Ram Chandra was able to resist all temptations and keep his character pure. His guardian, Mr. Kiddell, too, had no small share in developing his character and intellect. God in His infinite wisdom placed the young Maharaja under the guidance of Mr. Kiddell."

Sri Ram Chandra passed the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University, as the Matriculation Examination was then called, from the Ravenshaw Collegiate School in the year 1888, and the First Examination in Arts, now called the Intermediate Examination, two years later. He read up to the B.A. Standard, taking up science and

mathematics, for which subjects he had a special aptitude, but though he was very anxious to take his B.A. degree before settling down to the serious business of life, this was not permitted by Government in view of the opposition of the Raj family and of his long absence from home. On coming of age he had to return to Mayurbhanj to prepare himself for taking up the reins of administration of his State. He arrived in Baripada from Cuttack on attaining his majority on the 1st March, 1890, and was most enthusiastically received by his people. Thereafter, though he continued his studies under Mr. Kiddell and Babu Mohini Mohan Dhar, M.A. B.L., who coached him in science and mathematics, the cares and responsibilities—both State and domestic—which devolved on him interrupted this study; and when he went to Calcutta to sit for the examination, the illness of Mr. Kiddell and an outbreak of cholera among the people who had followed him upset his arrangements and filled his mind with such care and anxiety as to make his success practically impossible, though he only failed to gain the degree by a very narrow margin.

He assumed full control over the State on the 15th August, 1892, and from this time onward, his studies were directed mainly to philosophy and law, of which he acquired a wide and profound knowledge. He particularly admired and studied British law, the fundamental basis of which is equity and justice,



Belgoria Palace.

and gradually introduced it into his territory thus adopting the form of administration which obtains in British India. In this perhaps he was ahead of his time, but this was the natural outcome of his being far ahead of his people not only in education and culture, but also in power and originality of intellect and ideas.